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Kim et al.

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(54) **NONVOLATILE MEMORY DEVICE AND METHOD FOR FABRICATING THE SAME**

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H01L 29/792 (2006.01)

H01L 29/66 (2006.01)

H01L 27/115 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **H01L 29/792** (2013.01); **H01L 27/11582** (2013.01); **H01L 29/66833** (2013.01); **H01L 29/7926** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

None

See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

This technology relates to a nonvolatile memory device and a method for fabricating the same. The nonvolatile memory device may include a pipe connection gate electrode over a substrate, one or more pipe channel layers formed within the pipe connection gate electrode, pairs of main channel layers each connected with the pipe channel layer and extended in a direction substantially perpendicular to the substrate, a plurality of interlayer insulating layers and a plurality of cell gate electrodes alternately stacked along the main channel layers, and metal silicide layers configured to be in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode. The electric resistance of the pipe connection gate electrode may be greatly reduced without deteriorating the characteristics of the memory layers by forming the metal silicide layers coming in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode.

13 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets

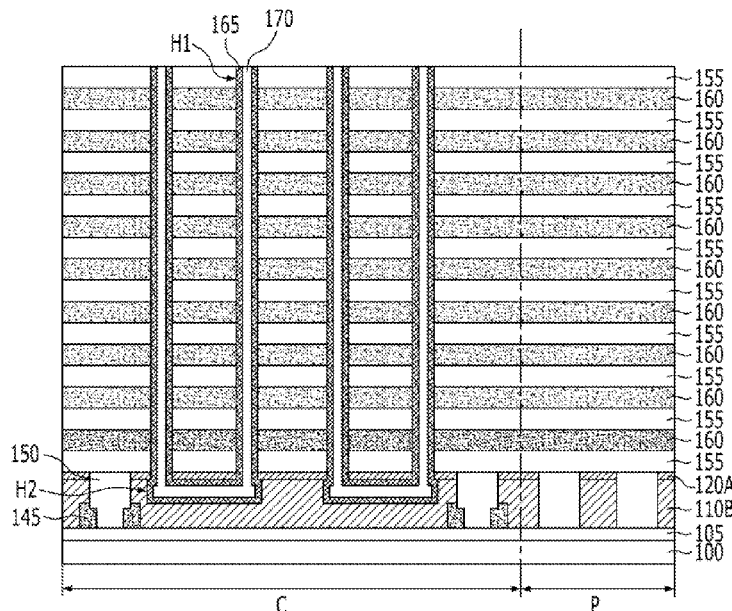


FIG. 1

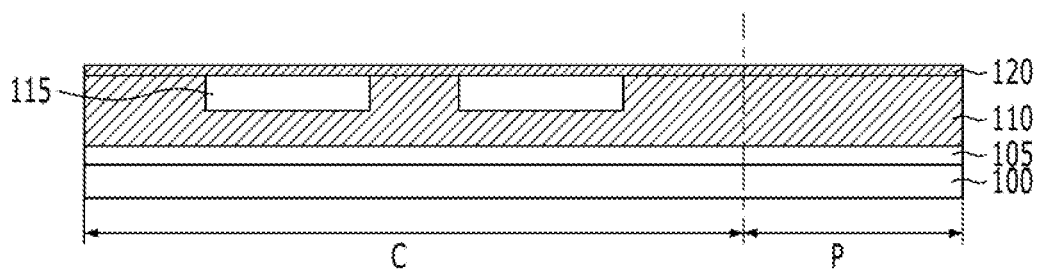


FIG. 2

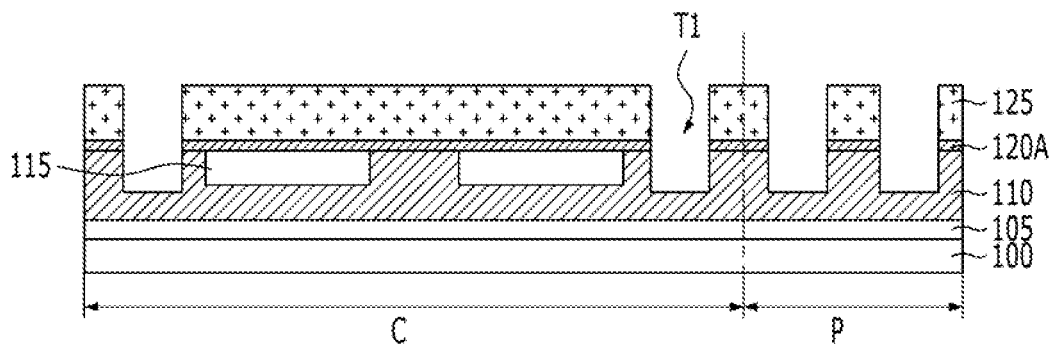


FIG. 3

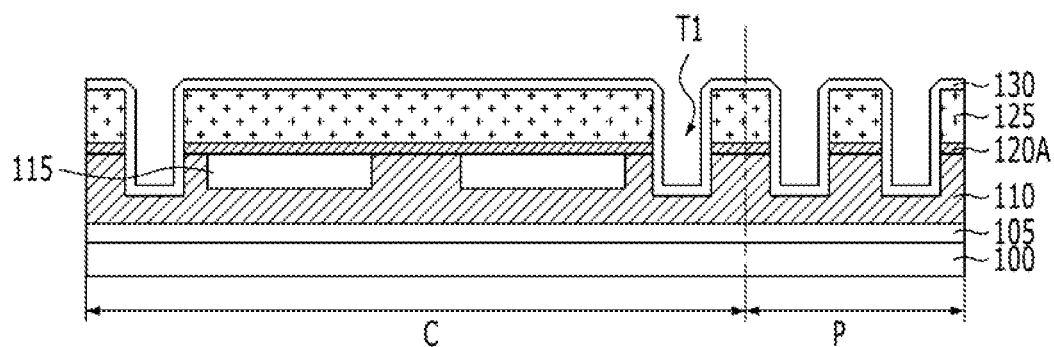


FIG. 4

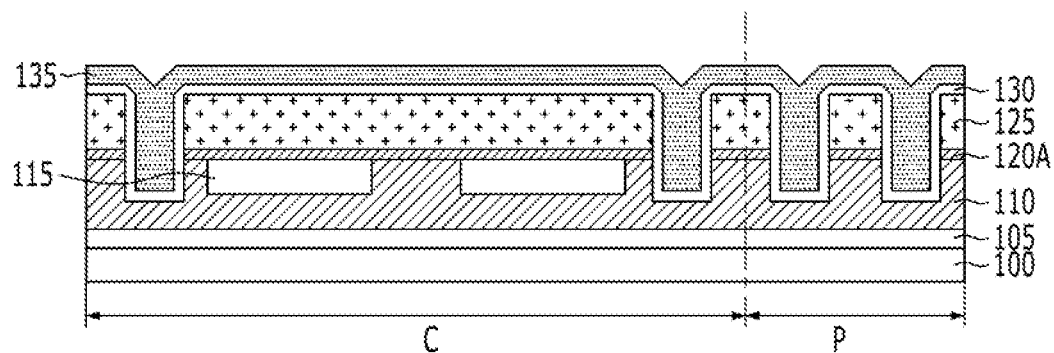


FIG. 5

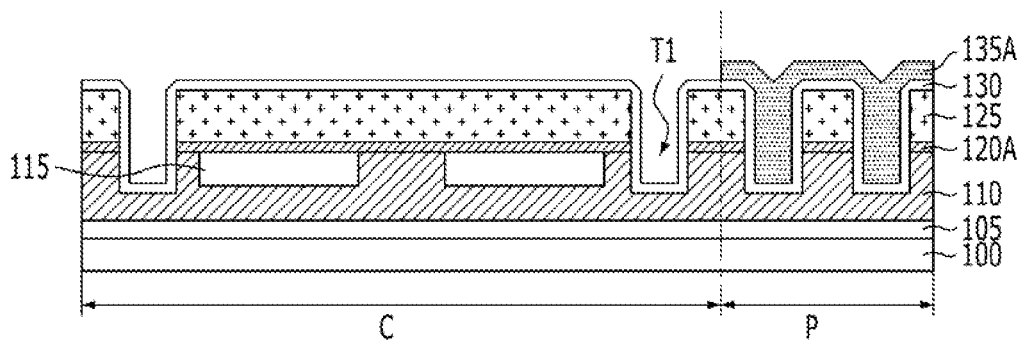


FIG. 6

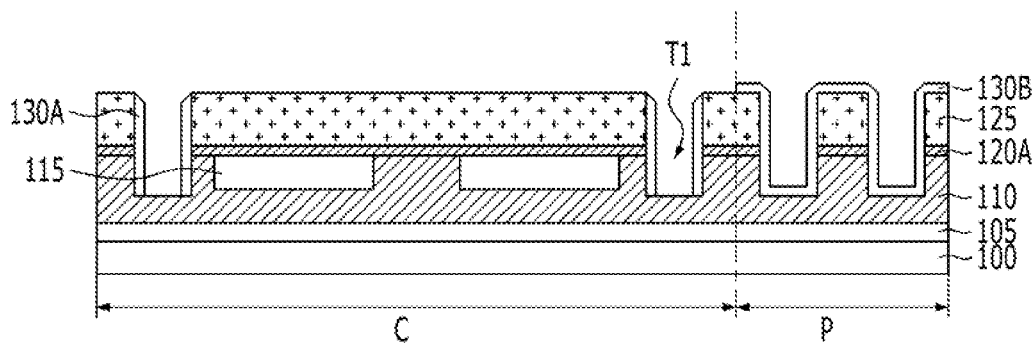


FIG. 7

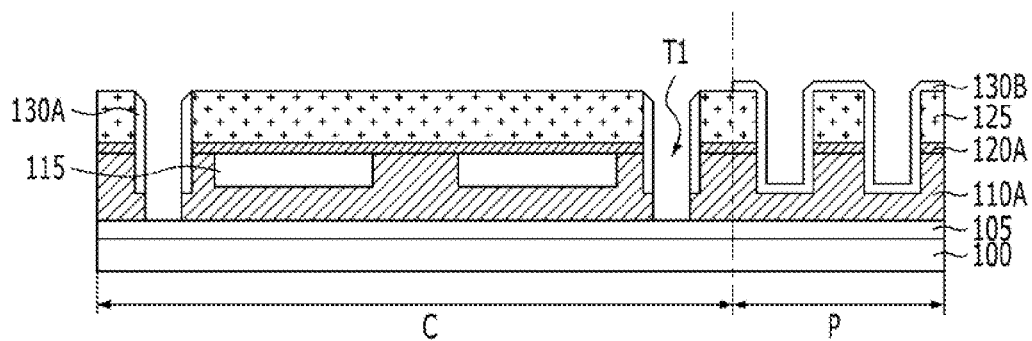


FIG. 8

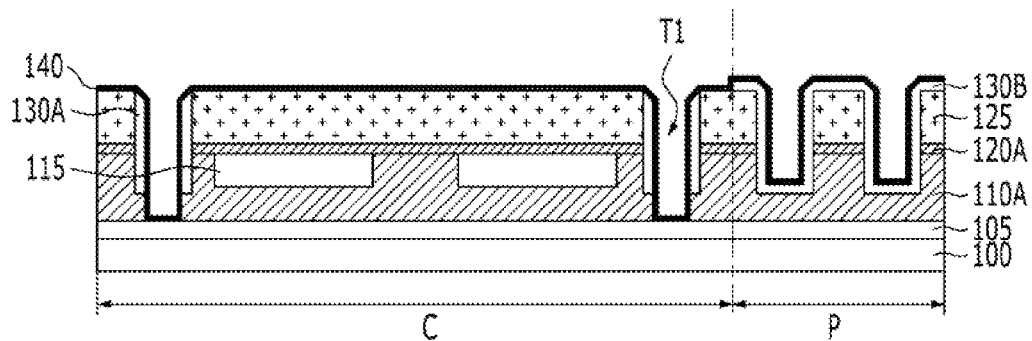


FIG. 11

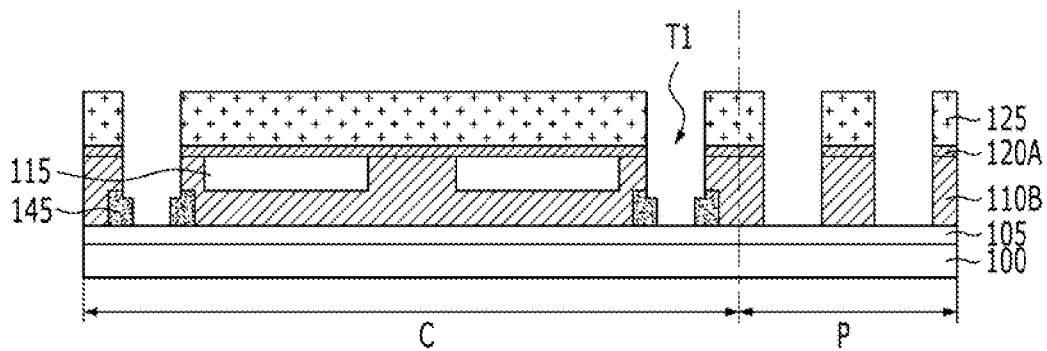


FIG. 12

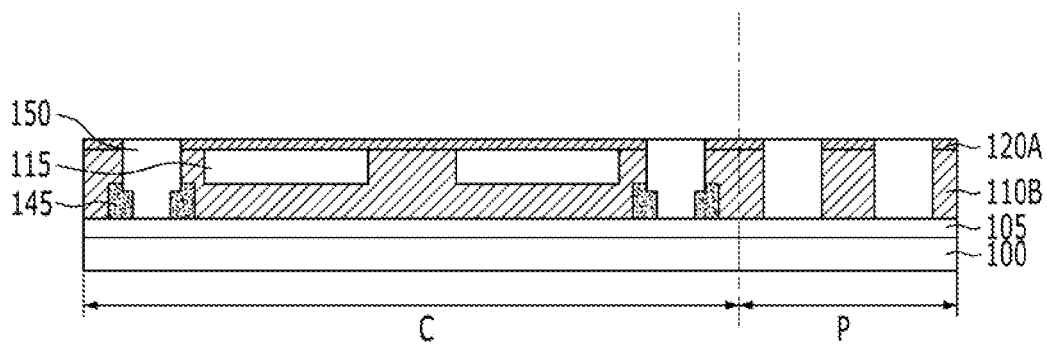


FIG. 13

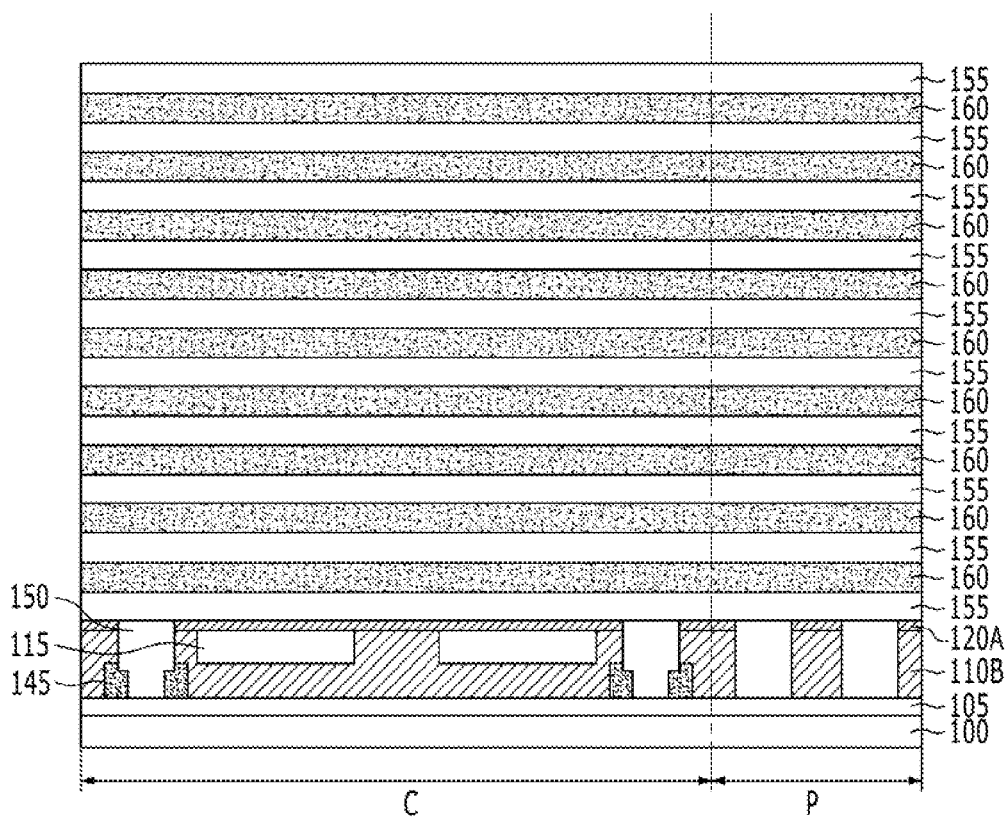


FIG. 14

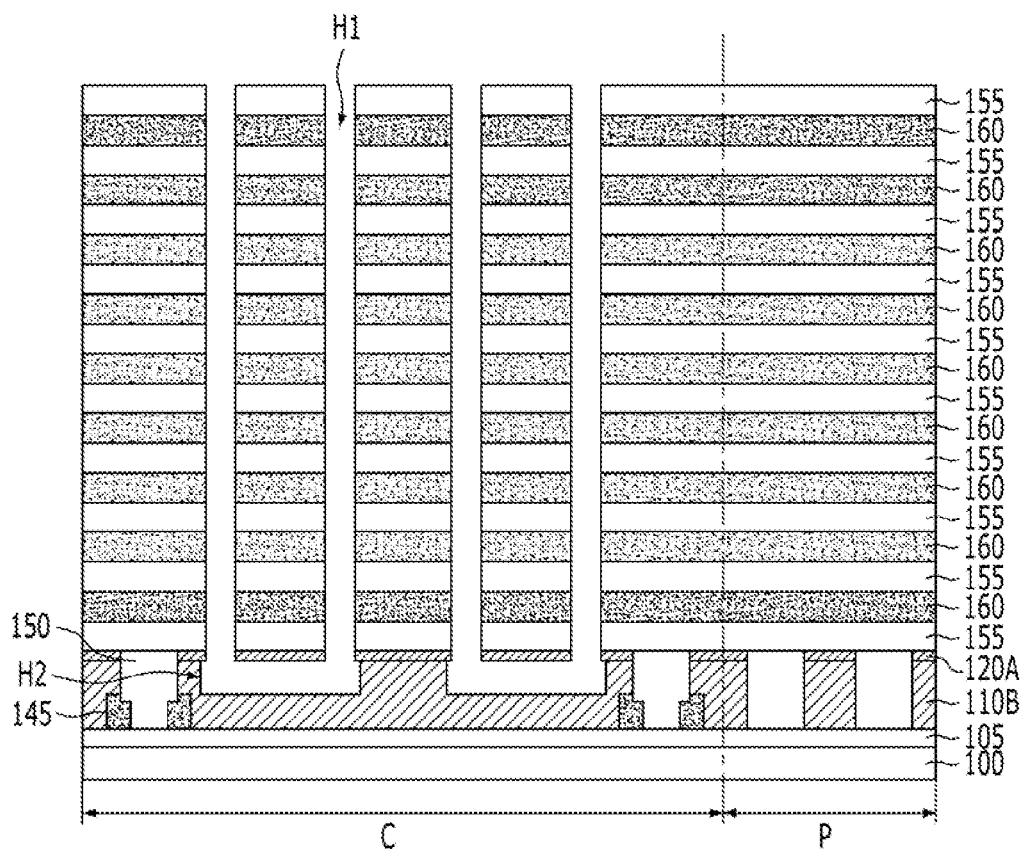


FIG. 15

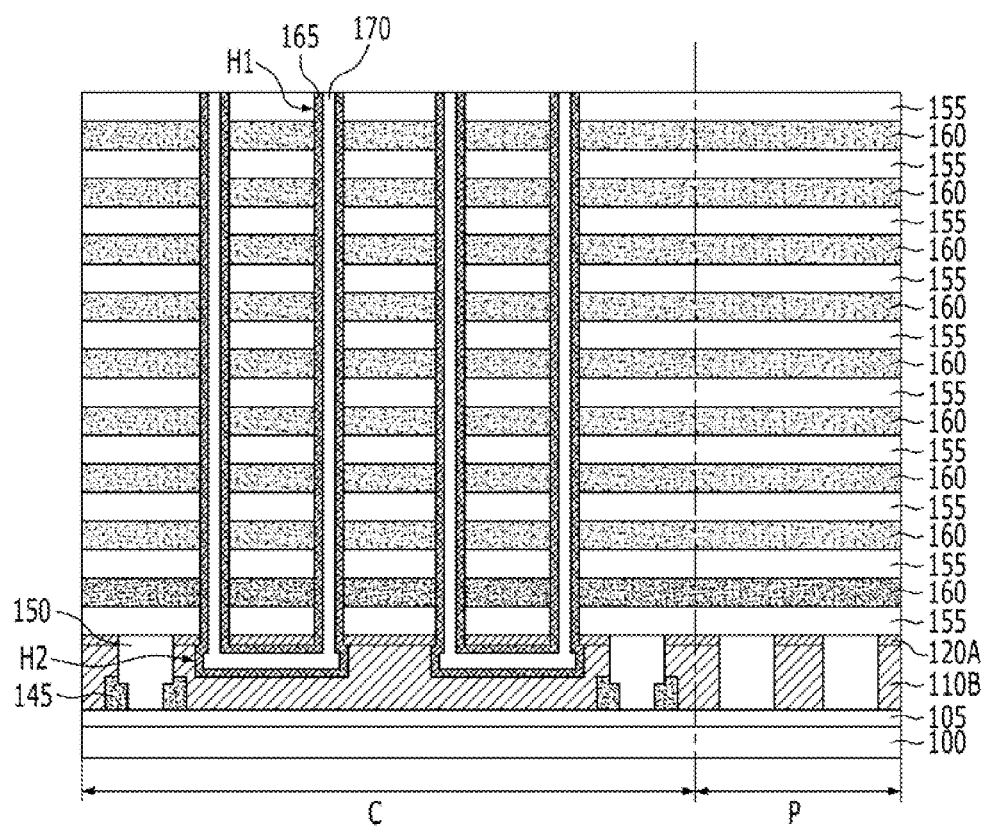


FIG. 16

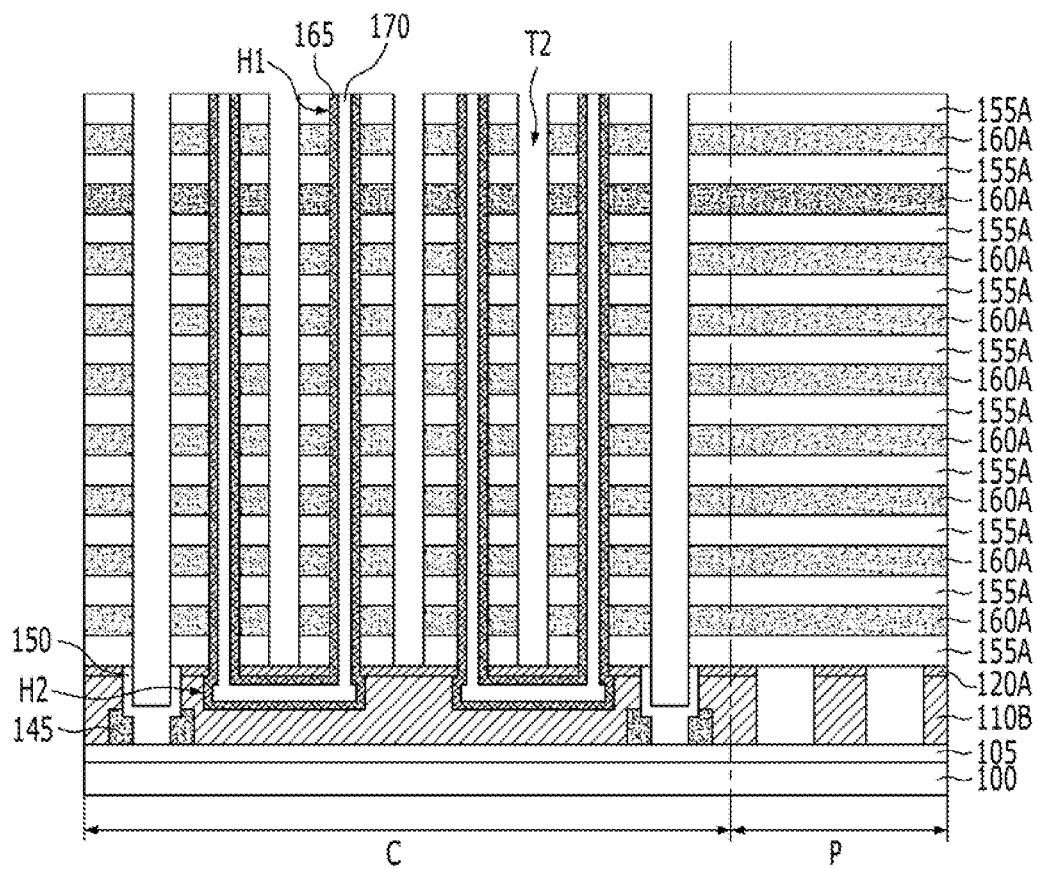
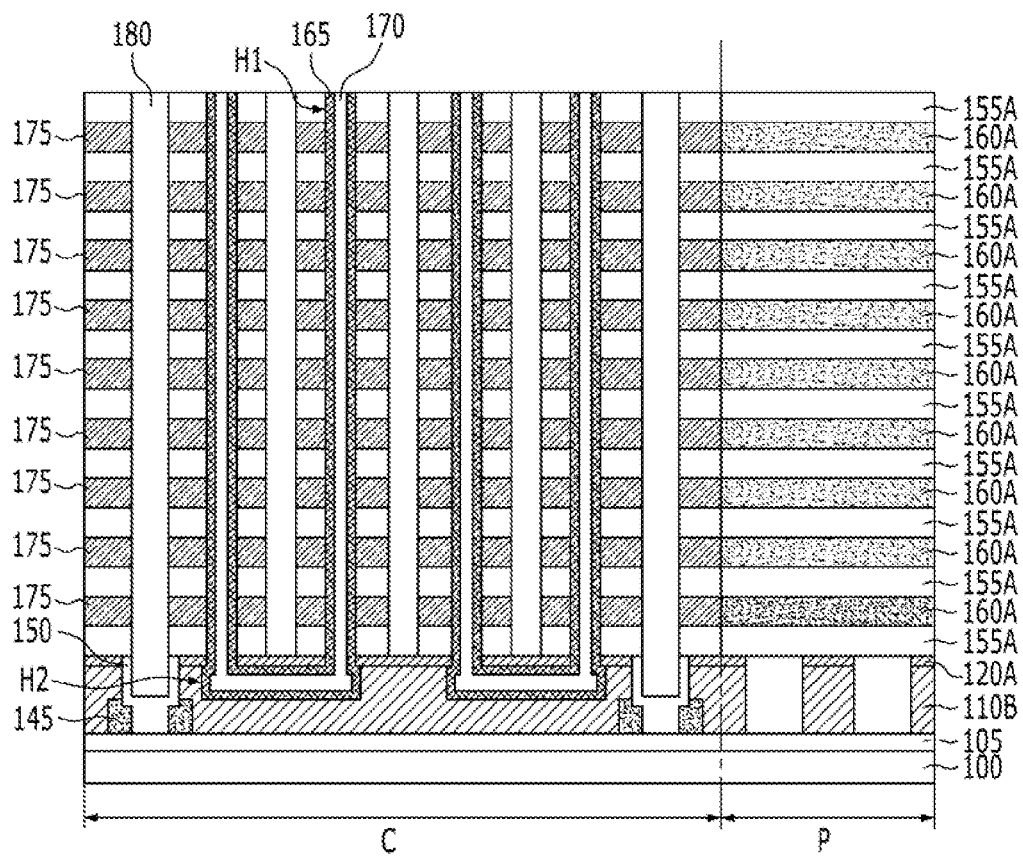


FIG. 18



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NONVOLATILE MEMORY DEVICE AND METHOD FOR FABRICATING THE SAME

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application claims priority of Korean Patent Application No. 10-2012-0091100, filed on Aug. 21, 2012, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

1. Field

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention relate to a nonvolatile memory device and a method for fabricating the same, and more particularly, to a three-dimensional (3-D) structured nonvolatile memory device in which a plurality of memory cells are stacked in a vertical direction over a substrate and a method for fabricating the same.

2. Description of the Related Art

A nonvolatile memory device retains stored data although the power is not supplied. A variety of nonvolatile memory devices, such as flash memory, are being widely used.

As the improvement of the degree of integration of two-dimensional (2-D) structured nonvolatile memory devices with memory cells that are formed over a semiconductor substrate in the form of a single layer has reached the limit, there has been proposed a 3-D structured nonvolatile memory device in which a plurality of memory cells is formed along channel layers in a vertical direction from a semiconductor substrate. More particularly, the 3-D structured nonvolatile memory device is mainly divided into a structure having a straight-line type channel layer and a structure having a U-shaped channel layer.

In the structure having a U-shaped channel layer, a pipe connection transistor is used to couple memory cell strings. However, there is a concern in that electric resistance may increase, because the gate electrode of the pipe connection transistor (hereinafter referred to as a pipe connection gate electrode) is mainly made of polysilicon. In particular, an increase in the height of the pipe connection gate electrode to reduce the electric resistance of the pipe connection gate electrode may be limited and may become ineffective in a subsequent process.

SUMMARY

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention are directed to a nonvolatile memory device in which the electric resistance of a pipe connection gate electrode may be greatly reduced by metal silicide layers that come in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode and a method for fabricating the same.

In accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, a nonvolatile memory device may include a pipe connection gate electrode over a substrate, one or more pipe channel layers formed within the pipe connection gate electrode, pairs of main channel layers each connected with the pipe channel layer and extended in a direction substantially perpendicular to the substrate, a plurality of interlayer insulating layers and a plurality of cell gate electrodes alternately stacked along the main channel layers, and metal silicide layers configured to be in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode.

In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention, a method for fabricating a nonvolatile memory device may include forming a conductive layer for a gate

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electrode, that includes at least one or more sacrificial layer patterns, over a substrate, forming at least one or more trenches by etching the conductive layer to a depth that does not fully penetrate the conductive layer, forming spacers on sidewalls of the trenches, forming a pipe connection gate electrode by etching the conductive layer under trenches, and forming metal silicide layers configured to be in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1 to 19 are cross-sectional views illustrating a nonvolatile memory device and a method for fabricating the same in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention will be described below in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. The present invention may, however, be embodied in different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the present invention to those skilled in the art. Throughout the disclosure, like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the various figures and embodiments of the present invention.

The drawings are not necessarily to scale and in some instances, proportions may have been exaggerated in order to clearly illustrate features of the embodiments. It should be readily understood that the meaning of "on" and "over" in the present disclosure should be interpreted in the broadest manner such that "on" not only means "directly on" something but also include the meaning of "on" something with an intermediate feature or a layer therebetween, and that "over" not only means the meaning of "over" something may also include the meaning it is "over" something with no intermediate feature or layer therebetween (i.e., directly on something).

FIGS. 1 to 19 are cross-sectional views illustrating a nonvolatile memory device and a method for fabricating the same in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, particular, FIG. 19 is a cross-sectional view illustrating the nonvolatile memory device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, and FIGS. 1 to 18 are cross-sectional views illustrating an example of intermediate processes for fabricating the nonvolatile memory device of FIG. 19.

Referring to FIG. 1, an isolation insulating layer **105** is formed over a substrate **100** having a cell region C and a peripheral region P. A first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes is formed over the isolation insulating layer **105**. The substrate **100** may be a semiconductor substrate, such as single crystalline silicon. The substrate **100** may include specific underlying structures (not shown). Furthermore, the isolation insulating layer **105** may have an oxide-based or nitride-based material. The first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes includes a semiconductor material, such as silicon (Si) that may form a compound by a reaction with metal. The first conductive layer **110** may be formed by depositing a conductive material, such as doped polysilicon.

Grooves are formed by selectively etching the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes in the cell region C. Sacrificial patterns **115** are formed in the grooves. Each of the sacrificial layer patterns **115** is removed in a subsequent process, thus functioning to provide a space in which a pipe channel hole to be described later will be formed. The sacri-

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ficial layer pattern **115** may have a material having an etch rate different from an etch rate of a second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes, and the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes. Furthermore, the sacrificial layer pattern **115** may have an island form that has a long axis in the direction of the cross section of FIG. 1 and a short axis in a direction crossing the cross section of FIG. 1. A plurality of sacrificial layer patterns **115** may be arranged in a matrix form when viewed from a plane parallel to the substrate **100**.

The second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes is formed on the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes and the sacrificial layer patterns **115**. The second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes may be formed by depositing a conductive material, such as doped polysilicon, and may have substantially the same material as the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes.

Referring to FIG. 2, a hard mask pattern **125** to cover regions where a pipe connection gate electrode and peripheral gate electrodes will be formed is formed on the second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes. Trenches **T1** are formed by partially etching the second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes and the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes using the hard mask pattern **125** as an etch mask.

The hard mask pattern **125** may include one or more selected from the group that includes an oxide-based or nitride-based material, polysilicon, an amorphous carbon layer (ACL), and a bottom anti-reflective coating (BARC) layer. In particular, the trenches **T1** may be etched to a depth that does not fully penetrate the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes. Meanwhile, the second conductive layer **120** for gate electrodes separated as a result of this process is called second conductive layer patterns **120A** for gate electrodes.

Referring to FIG. 3, a material layer **130** for spacers is formed on the entire surface of the substrate **100** in which the trenches **T1** are formed. The material layer **130** for spacers may be used to form spacers on the sidewalls of the trenches **T1** in the cell region **C** and may be formed by depositing an oxide-based or nitride-based material conformably.

Referring to FIG. 4, a mask layer **135** is formed on the material layer **130**. The mask layer **135** may include one or more selected from the group that includes an oxide-based or nitride-based material, polysilicon, an ACL layer, and a BARC layer.

Referring to FIG. 5, a mask pattern **135A** to cover the peripheral region **P** is formed by removing the mask layer **135** of the cell region **C**. The mask pattern **135A**, which is also called a cell open mask, functions to prevent spacers from being formed in the peripheral region **P**.

Referring to FIG. 6, spacers **130A** are formed on the sidewalls of the trenches **T1** in the cell region **C** by blanket-etching the material layer **130** for spacers so that the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes is exposed. Here, the material layer **130** for spacers in the peripheral region **P** is not etched, because it is protected by the mask pattern **135A**. The material layer **130** that remains in the peripheral region **P** as a result of this process is called a material layer pattern **130B** for spacers. In some embodiments, after this process, the remaining mask pattern **135A** may be removed by performing an additional cleaning process.

Referring to FIG. 7, a first conductive layer-primary pattern **110A** for gate electrodes is formed by etching the first conductive layer **110** for gate electrodes under the trenches **T1** in the cell region **C**. As a result of this process, a pipe connection gate electrode including the first conductive layer-primary pattern **110A** and the second conductive layer pattern **120A** in the cell region **C** is formed. The pipe connection gate

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electrode includes the first and the second conductive layers **110** and **120** for gate electrodes that are separated for each block and may have a form that surrounds the sacrificial layer pattern **115**.

Referring to FIG. 8, a metal layer **140** is formed on the entire surface of the substrate **100** including the pipe connection gate electrode. The metal layer **140** may include one or more selected from the group that includes metals, such as cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni), titanium (Ti), platinum (Pt), and palladium (Pd) which may form a compound by a reaction with a semiconductor material, such as silicon (Si). The metal layer **140** may be formed by depositing the metals conformably using an atomic layer deposition (ALD) or chemical vapor deposition (CVD) method.

Referring to FIG. 9, the substrate **100** in which the metal layer **140** is formed is subject to an annealing process. The annealing process may be performed using a rapid thermal annealing (RTA) or furnace annealing method. The first conductive layer-primary pattern **110A** that comes in contact with the metal layer **140** in the cell region **C** reacts with the metal layer **140** as a result of this process, thereby forming metal silicide layers **145**. The metal silicide layer **145** may include metal silicides, such as cobalt silicide (CoSi_x), nickel silicide (NiSi_x), titanium silicide (TiSi_x), platinum silicide (PtSi_x), or palladium silicide (PdSi_x).

The metal silicide layer **145** may be formed at the lower part of the pipe connection gate electrode. The metal silicide layer **145** is not formed in the peripheral region **P**, because the metal layer **140** is separated from the first conductive layer-primary pattern **110A** for gate electrodes and the second conductive layer pattern **120A** for gate electrodes by the material layer pattern **130B**. In particular, the material layer pattern **130B** functions to prevent the metal silicide layer **145** from being in contact with the sacrificial layer patterns **115**, because the metal silicide layers **145** is excessively formed. Accordingly, the characteristics of a memory layer to be described later may be prevented from being deteriorated.

Referring to FIG. 10, a strip process of removing the metal layer **140** remaining without a reaction in the annealing process is performed. In order to remove the remaining metal layer, a mixed solution of sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4) and hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2) that is, a sulfuric acid and hydro-peroxide mixture (SPM), may be used. After the strip process, an additional annealing process may be performed.

Referring to FIG. 11, after removing the spacers **130A** and the material layer pattern **130B**, a first conductive layer-secondary pattern **110B** for gate electrodes is formed by etching the first conductive layer-primary pattern **110A** for gate electrodes under the trenches **T1** in the peripheral region **P**. In order to remove the spacers **130A** and the material layer pattern **130B**, a wet etch process may be performed. As a result of this process, peripheral gate electrodes, each including the first conductive layer-secondary pattern **110B** for gate electrodes and the second conductive layer pattern **120A** for gate electrodes are formed in the peripheral region **P**.

Referring to FIG. 12, after removing the hard mask patterns **125**, first burial insulating layers **150** are formed within the trenches **T1**. The first burial insulating layers **150** may be formed by depositing an oxide-based or nitride-based material to a thickness that fills the trenches **T1** and then performing a polishing process, such as chemical mechanical polishing (CMP), until a top surface of the second conductive layer patterns **120A** for gate electrodes is exposed.

Referring to FIG. 13, a plurality of first material layers **155** and a plurality of second material layers **160** are alternately stacked over the second conductive layer patterns **120A** for gate electrodes and the first burial insulating layers **150**. A

structure in which the plurality of first material layers **155** and the plurality of second material layers **160** are alternately stacked is hereinafter referred to as a stack structure, for convenience of description. Meanwhile, the first material layers **155** may be disposed at the top and bottom of the stack structure. This cross section illustrates that the number of second material layers **160** is 9, but this is only illustrative. The number of second material layers **160** may be less than or greater than 9.

In the present embodiment, the first material layer **155** may be an interlayer insulating layer, and the second material layer **160** may be a sacrificial layer that may be removed in a subsequent process, thus providing a space where a cell gate electrode will be formed. In this case, the first material layer **155** may include an oxide-based material, and the second material layer **160** may include a material having an etch rate different from an etch rate of the first material layer **155**, for example, a nitride-based material.

However, the present invention is not limited to the above examples. In another embodiment, the first material layer **155** may be an interlayer insulating layer, and the second material layer **160** may be a conductive layer for a cell gate electrode. In this case, the first material layer **155** may include an oxide-based material, and the second material layer **160** may include a conductive material, such as polysilicon. In yet another embodiment, the first material layer **155** may be a sacrificial layer that provides a space where an interlayer insulating layer will be formed, and the second material layer **160** may be a conductive layer for a cell gate electrode. In this case, the first material layer **155** may include undoped polysilicon, and the second material layer **160** may include a conductive material, such as doped polysilicon.

Referring to FIG. **14**, pairs of main channel holes **H1** through which the sacrificial layer patterns **115** are exposed are formed by selectively etching the stack structure and the second conductive layer patterns **120A** for gate electrodes. Each of the main channel holes **H1** may have a circular or oval shape when viewed from a plane parallel to the substrate **100**, and each of the pairs of main channel holes **H1** may be placed in each sacrificial layer pattern **115**.

The sacrificial layer patterns **115** exposed through the pairs of main channel holes **H1** are removed. In order to remove the sacrificial layer patterns **115**, a wet etch process using an etch selectivity with the pipe connection gate electrode and the stack structure may be performed. As a result of this process, pipe channel holes **H2** each coupling a pair of the main channel holes **H1** are formed in the respective spaces from which the sacrificial layer patterns **115** are removed.

Referring to FIG. **15**, a memory layer **165** and a channel layer **170** are sequentially formed on the inner walls of the pairs of main channel holes **H1** and the pipe channel holes **H2**. The memory layer **165** may be formed by depositing a charge blocking layer, a charge trap layer, and a tunnel insulating layer sequentially.

The tunnel insulating layer is for charge tunneling and may include an oxide layer, for examples. The charge trap layer functions to store data by trapping charges, and the charge trap layer may include a nitride layer, for example. The charge blocking layer functions to preclude charges within the charge trap layer from moving externally. The charge blocking layer may include an oxide layer, for example. That is, the memory layer **165** may have a three-layer structure of Oxide-Nitride-Oxide (ONO) layers.

Furthermore, the channel layer **170** may be formed by depositing a semiconductor material, such as polysilicon, and may be divided into a main channel layer within the main channel hole **H1** and a pipe channel layer within the pipe

channel hole **H2**. In particular, the main channel layer may be used as the channel of a memory cell or a select transistor, and the pipe channel layer may be used as the channel of a pipe connection transistor. Meanwhile, in the present embodiment, the channel layer **170** is illustrated as being formed to a thickness that fully fills the main channel hole **H1** and the pipe channel hole **H2**, but the present invention is not limited thereto. In another embodiment, the channel layer **170** may be formed to a thickness that does not fully fill the main channel hole **H1** and the pipe channel hole **H2**.

Referring to FIG. **16**, slits **T2** are formed by selectively etching the stack structure on both sides of each of the main channel holes **H1**. Each of the slits **T2** separates the first material layers **155** and the second material layers **160** of the cell region **C** in a line form. A plurality of slits **T2** may be extended in a direction crossing the cross section of FIG. **16** and may be arranged in parallel. Meanwhile, as a result of this process, part of the first burial insulating layers **150** may be etched, and the separated first material layers **155** and the separated second material layers **160** are referred to as first material layer patterns **155A** and second material layer patterns **160A**.

Referring to FIG. **17**, the second material layer patterns **160A** of the cell region **C** exposed by the formation of the slits **T2** are removed. In order to remove the second material layer patterns **160A**, a wet etch process using an etch selectivity with the first material layer patterns **155A** may be performed.

Referring to FIG. **18**, cell gate electrodes **175** are formed in the spaces that the second material layer patterns **160A** are removed. The cell gate electrodes **175** may be formed by the following process.

First, a conductive layer (not shown) for the cell gate electrodes is formed to a thickness that fills the spaces that the second material layer patterns **160A** are removed by conformably depositing a conductive material, such as metal or metal nitride, using an ALD or CVD method. Next, the conductive layer for the cell gate electrodes is etched until the sides of the first material layer patterns **155A** are exposed, with the result that the conductive layer is separated for each layer and the cell gate electrode **175** is formed between the first material layer patterns **155A**.

Next, second burial insulating layers **180** are formed within the slits **T2**. The second burial insulating layers **180** may be formed by depositing an oxide-based or nitride-based material to a thickness that fills the slits **T2** and then performing a polishing process, such as CMP, until a top surface of the first material layer patterns **155A** is exposed.

Referring to FIG. **19**, a second interlayer insulating layer **185** is formed on the result in which the second burial insulating layers **180** is formed. The second interlayer insulating layer **185** may be formed by depositing an oxide-based or nitride-based material.

First contact plugs **190** each formed to penetrate the second interlayer insulating layer **185** of the cell region **C** and connected with the channel layer **170**, and second contact plugs **195** each formed to penetrate the second interlayer insulating layer **185**, the stack structure, the first burial insulating layer **150**, and the isolation insulating layer **105** of the peripheral region **P** and connected with the junction (not shown) of the substrate **100** are formed. The first and the second contact plugs **190** and **195** may include a conductive material, such as doped polysilicon, metal, or metal nitride.

In accordance with the above-described fabrication method, the nonvolatile memory device in accordance with the embodiment of the present invention, such as that shown in FIG. **19**, may be fabricated.

Referring to FIG. 19, the nonvolatile memory device in accordance with the embodiment of the present invention may include the isolation insulating layers 105 over the substrate 100 including the cell region C and the peripheral region P, the pipe connection gate electrode over the isolation insulating layer 105 of the cell region C, the channel layers 170 each configured to include one or more pipe channel layers formed within the pipe connection gate electrode and a pair of the main channel layers connected with the respective pipe channel layers and extended in a direction substantially perpendicular to the substrate 100, the plurality of first material layer patterns 155A and the plurality of cell gate electrodes 175 alternately stacked along the main channel layers, the memory layer 165 interposed between the cell gate electrodes 175, the pipe connection gate electrode, and the channel layer 170, the metal silicide layers 145 configured to be in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode, the first contact plugs 190 connected with the tops of the channel layers 170, the peripheral gate electrodes over the isolation insulating layer 105 of the peripheral region P, and the second contact plugs 195 connected with the substrate 100 on both sides of the peripheral gate electrodes.

Here, the pipe connection gate electrode may include the first conductive layer-primary pattern 110A for gate electrodes and the second conductive layer patterns 120A for gate electrodes, which are separated by a block in the cell region C. The peripheral gate electrode may include the first conductive layer-secondary pattern 110B for gate electrodes and the second conductive layer pattern 120A for gate electrodes in the peripheral region P.

Meanwhile, the channel layer 170 may have a U shape, and the memory layer 165 may surround the channel layer 170. Furthermore, the cell gate electrodes 175 may surround the sides of the main channel layers and extended in a direction crossing the cross section of FIG. 19. In particular, the electric resistance of the pipe connection gate electrode is greatly reduced by the metal silicide layers 145 that are in contact with a lower part of the pipe connection gate electrode.

In accordance with the nonvolatile memory device and the method for fabricating the same in accordance with the embodiment of the present invention, the electric resistance of the pipe connection gate electrode may be greatly reduced without deteriorating the characteristics of the memory layer by forming the metal silicide layers coming in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode.

While the present invention has been described with respect to the specific embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for fabricating a nonvolatile memory device, comprising:

- forming a conductive layer for a gate electrode, that includes at least one or more sacrificial layer patterns, over a substrate;
- forming at least one or more trenches by etching the conductive layer to a depth that does not fully penetrate the conductive layer, wherein the trenches are formed not to overlap with the sacrificial layer patterns;
- forming spacers on sidewalls of the trenches;
- forming a pipe connection gate electrode by etching the conductive layer under the trenches; and
- forming metal silicide layers configured to be in contact with the pipe connection gate electrode.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein forming the conductive layer comprises:

- forming a first conductive layer for a gate electrode over the substrate;
- forming a plurality of grooves by selectively etching the first conductive layer for a gate electrode; and
- forming the sacrificial layer patterns within each of the grooves.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising forming a second conductive layer for a gate electrode over the first conductive layer and the sacrificial layer patterns, after forming the sacrificial layer patterns.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the forming of the metal silicide layers comprises:

- forming a metal layer on sides of the pipe connection gate electrode; and
- annealing the substrate in which the metal layer is formed.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising removing the metal layer that remains without a reaction, after annealing the substrate in which the metal layer is formed.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the sacrificial layer patterns comprise a material having an etch rate different from an etch rate of the conductive layer.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein:

- the substrate comprises a cell region and a peripheral region, and
- the method further comprises forming a plurality of peripheral gate electrodes by selectively etching the conductive layer in the peripheral region, after forming the metal silicide layers.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the metal silicide layers are not formed on the peripheral gate electrodes.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- alternately stacking a plurality of first material layers and a plurality of second material layers over the substrate in which the pipe connection gate electrode is formed, after forming the metal silicide layers;
- forming pairs of main channel holes, each configured to have the sacrificial layer pattern exposed through each pair of main channel holes, by selectively etching the first material layers and the second material layers;
- forming a pipe channel hole connected to a pair of the main channel holes by removing the sacrificial layer patterns; and

forming a plurality of channel layers in the pairs of main channel holes and the pipe channel holes.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein:

- the first material layers are interlayer insulating layers, and
- the second material layers are sacrificial layers.

11. The method of claim 9, further comprising forming a memory layer on inner walls of the pairs of main channel holes and the pipe channel holes, after forming the pipe channel holes.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the second material layers comprise a material having an etch rate different from an etch rate of the first material layers.

13. The method of claim 9, further comprising:

- forming a plurality of slits to a depth that penetrates the plurality of second material layers on both sides of the main channel hole, after forming the channel layers;
- removing the second material layers exposed by the slits; and
- forming cell gate electrodes in spaces that the second material layers are removed.